THE

INDIAN MUTINY

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THE

PERSONAL ADVENTURES AND EXPERIENCES

OF

A MAGISTRATE

DURING THE

RISE, PROGRESS, AND SUPPRESSION

OF THE

INDIAN MUTINY

By MARK THORNHILL

BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE RETIRED

WITH FRONTISPIECE AND PLAN

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1884

CONTENTS.



Errata.

Page 19, line 14, *for* It *read* They
,, 85, l. 14, *insert* comma *after* 'passed'
,, 112, l. 5 from foot, *for* have been warned *read* had been warned
,, 119, l. 1, *for* waggon with sides *read* waggon without sides
,, 126, l. 6 from foot, *for* Kautzow *read* Kantzow
,, 129, l. 2, *for* Hervey *read* Harvey
,, 216, l. 10 from foot, *for* its appearance *read* their appearance

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messenger presently galloped in to inform me that Captain Nixon was approaching with the Bhurtpore army. About dusk the army arrived; Captain Nixon brought with him several officers whose presence still further swelled our party. But in India guests are easily accommodated—the heat made it pleasant to sleep out of doors. I had beds arranged in the verandah and on a terrace beyond; soon after nine all the party were slumbering on them, all but myself and a few others, who preferred to sit up till later, and watch the moonlight.

CHAPTER II.

THE ASSEMBLING OF THE ARMY.

BHURTPORE is a small independent State, adjoining Muttra on the west. The Rajah had died some four years previously to the occurrence of the events I am relating, and the English Government had assumed charge of the territory till the infant son he had left should come of age. The administration of the State was conducted by an English officer, Major Morrison, who had the title of Agent, and several assistants, of whom the chief was Captain Nixon. Captain Nixon had received early intelligence of the disturbances at Delhi, and had immediately proposed to the Government to make use of the Bhurtpore troops to aid in suppressing them. The proposal had been approved of, and he had been authorised to march the army to Delhi, taking Muttra by the way. From some oversight these orders had not been communicated to me, and I was in consequence unaware of Captain Nixon's approach till about an hour before he entered the station.

As it was supposed that the mutineers were marching down on us, Captain Nixon decided to suspend his advance and await their arrival on the other side of the city, where he proposed to place his troops in position and throw up entrenchments. The city itself was very capable of defence, for it was full of narrow lanes and

houses of solid stone. At Captain Nixon's suggestion I erected barricades at the principal entrances, I raised guards, and I adopted various other measures to enable the inhabitants to co-operate with the soldiers—measures to which I looked back with some amusement, when I became better acquainted with the feelings of the citizens and their fighting capabilities.

Soon after breakfast I received a visit from two brothers—the Seths; they were wealthy bankers, and the persons of the greatest influence in the city. They came ostensibly to show me a letter they had received from their agent at Delhi, but the real object of their visit was to warn me against the Sepoy guard, whom they informed me intended to mutiny on the first opportunity, and carry off the treasure. They added that the guard would have mutinied the previous evening but for the unexpected arrival of Captain Nixon's troops.

We had then in the treasury over half a million of silver rupees, and about ten thousand pounds' worth of copper coins, and money no longer current. During the first two days after my return from Agra I had become doubtful of the fidelity of the guard, and I had in consequence requested permission to send the treasure in to Agra; in anticipation of the permission I had caused the rupees to be packed in boxes, and had collected carts for their conveyance. On the departure of the Seths I sent off a mounted messenger to Agra, reiterating my suspicions of the guard, and renewing my request for permission to send in the treasure.

In the course of the day we received intelligence that our fears regarding the approach of the mutineers were groundless. They were fortifying themselves in Delhi, from whence, apparently, they had no intention of departing. On this Captain Nixon decided to continue

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Our halting place was just beyond the little town of Kosee. We put up in the Customs bungalow, the army encamped near us on the plain.

Kosee was the limit of my district; when the army moved on the next morning I did not accompany it. My orders had been to march with the army to procure it supplies, and to make use of it if necessary for the repression of disturbances. When it passed beyond the limits of my jurisdiction my connection with it ceased.

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posal, and with infinite bombast said he would start at once to any I might name, burn the houses, and kill the inhabitants. But when I explained that as the villagers were armed and would fight the killing might not be all on one side, his ardour cooled, and he remarked that perhaps he had better remain where he was.

We then discussed military matters of which, notwithstanding his rank in the army, I found he was perfectly ignorant. Nevertheless he regarded himself as much better informed than his fellow chiefs, most of whom he spoke of with contempt as 'mere civilians.' He told me quite plainly that both he and they hated the expedition, and I inferred that they felt no love for Captain Nixon for having suggested it.

As I had nothing else to do, nor he either, we chatted a long time, and I obtained from him much information about the Bhurtpore State and its army. What he said of the army confirmed the impression which, from my own observation, I had formed of it, that it was a mere mob, badly armed, worse disciplined, and commanded by a set of chiefs at once ignorant, cowardly, and full of dissension among themselves. The Ulwar force was more efficient. The artillery was really good, and the cavalry, if they chose to fight, were capable of doing so. As these armies have been so often mentioned in my narrative, it may perhaps be not uninteresting to the reader to learn something of the country from whence they came.

The soil of Upper India diminishes in fertility as it tends to the West. Beyond the Jumna the vegetation becomes less luxuriant. Before many marches are completed the traveller finds himself in a region whose appearance is very much that of a desert. This region is Rajpootana, or 'the land of the Rajpoots,' the caste who chiefly inhabit it. It is about the size of Germany,

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The directions issued at that time to the revenue officers teem with exhortations for attendance to this principle. Nevertheless it was discovered that a too implicit obedience to these instructions had a tendency to retard promotion. The settlement of the revenue was entrusted to young officers whose careers were before them. It is not surprising that it was fixed at an amount which the Zemindars were not long able to pay. In good seasons they made little, in bad seasons they were ruined.

The native governments collected their revenues by seizing the standing crops. They also compelled payment by other methods, which were, to our ideas, equally cumbersome, wasteful, and cruel. For these methods we substituted the simple expedient of selling the estates of the defaulters.

In the native opinion, rights in land were invested with a degree of sanctity; their laws gave expression to this sentiment. A man could not be deprived of his inheritance for debts due either to the State or to individuals. Mortgages were not unfrequent, but permanent alienations were unknown. Under our rule this was changed; land was made liable to sale in the same manner as other property. The effect of this alteration was that, in the course of a generation, the greater portion of the soil had changed owners. The ancient proprietors had given place to new men, mostly strangers, often Bunniahs. The Bunniahs were a class peculiar to India, impossible elsewhere. They were the hereditary traders and bankers, and in consequence of the system of caste possessed a monopoly in both occupations.

The rural Bunniah was at once grocer and corn-dealer, and supplier of such other commodities as the simple habits of the villagers created a demand for. He was also the money-lender, making advances to the cul-

tivators for the purchase of their seed and agricultural implements, for their marriage expenses, and for the payment of their rents and revenue. From the Zemindar downwards the whole village was usually in his debt, and of all creditors he was the most pitiless.

Under the native rule his exactions were somewhat restrained; the land of his debtors was beyond his reach, and if his extortions exceeded a certain limit he ran the risk of assassination. The result of our government was to remove these restraints; the law gave the Bunniah protection, it also gave him the land as a security for his claims, and—what it is sad to acknowledge—by its cumbrous procedure, by its delays, and by its expensiveness, it gave him the means for fabricating these claims. So great were the facilities it afforded in this way, that forged documents and false witnesses became almost as much part of the stock in trade of a successful Bunniah, as his account books or his commodities.

The old proprietors belonged to the village; the cultivators were men of their own caste, often their relations. They loved their land for itself, independent of the rent it afforded them. The feeling of the new proprietors was different—they cared nothing for the land, they desired only to get a profit out of their investment. Being withheld by no considerations of sentiment, they succeeded in extracting a rental where their predecessors had failed to do so, and for a time in also paying the Government revenue, but not for long. Eventually they too became defaulters, and the Government, convinced at length that its demand was excessive, reluctantly lowered it.

Our settlement of the revenue had been cruel to the Talookdars—it had been oppressive towards the Zemindars; but, notwithstanding its severity, it had greatly

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some villages there were similar feuds between the different clans composing the population. These feuds, after slumbering for half a century, were now revived and fought out.

Three weeks had hardly elapsed since the commencement of the mutiny, but in that short period a large portion of the district had lapsed into anarchy. Order was only maintained in the towns, and in those few portions of the country where the ancient proprietors still held possession of their villages.

After leaving Kosee, the Bhurtpore and Ulwar armies had marched on one stage to a village named 'Hodul,' and there they had since remained. The chiefs did not openly say that they would go no further, but each day they found some fresh excuse for not doing so. The time had now arrived when the guard was to be relieved at Muttra, which it usually was at the expiration of every second month. In consequence of my report of the misconduct of the present guard, one of their English officers had been sent to take charge of them; the officer selected was a young lieutenant of the name of Burlton—he was at present a guest in my house.

I had repeatedly warned the Government that the guard would probably mutiny so soon as it was reinforced by the relieving company, and I had recommended that the temptation to do so should be removed by previously sending the treasure into Agra. To these warnings and to this recommendation no attention had been paid. The Government expressed themselves convinced of the loyalty of the Sepoys, and treated my apprehensions as groundless alarms.

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return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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to my satisfaction, that all the men of the village had flocked down and were standing before and around us; but so perfectly still and silent were they, that neither by whisper nor movement had I been aware of their presence. The sight of this crowd made me conjecture that the news of the mutiny of the guard had got abroad, and also made me a little anxious as to what the effect of the news on the country would be.

When the villagers saw that I perceived them, their head men came forward, made some respectful salutations, and informed me that they had assembled to express their loyalty to the Government; they added that if I would allow them, they would give proof of their attachment to our rule by defending the caravanserai should the mutineer Sepoys advance to attack it. Their professions of loyalty were so vehement, and apparently so genuine, that for all my experience I was induced to put credit in them. I committed the caravanserai to their care. It just then contained the Government records and treasure of that division of the district, and also horses and other property of my own.

While this conversation was going on, I noticed a man standing near me armed with one of those odd-looking spears of solid steel, and learnt to my surprise that the man was none other than my Bengalee clerk, Baboo Bycunt, whose cowardice at the commencement of the march had occasioned me so much trouble. The rebel army not coming down from Delhi, he had got over his apprehensions and rejoined my camp, and was now, I was told, become so valiant as to contemplate fighting, and had procured the weapon that had attracted my attention.

The Baboo's valour was being extolled in terms that showed it was not much believed in, when I felt someone touch me on my shoulder, and turning my head per-

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our army before Delhi by the direct route if they could ; if not, to cross the river Jumna and get round by Meerut.

I thought the decision an unwise one, for I felt pretty sure that they would not succeed in reaching Delhi, or even Meerut. I pointed out these objections, and proposed that instead they should accompany me to Muttra, where, with Mr. Harvey's permission, I was returning to resume my charge of the city and district. However, they held to their determination, and we wished good-bye. Mr. Joyce and I turned our horses, and, accompanied by our escort, cantered off to the south. Mr. Harvey and the rest of the party moved away in the other direction, their troopers following them, and also, towering high above the horsemen, the two elephants.

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We had now, we thought, got beyond fear of pursuit, and our apprehensions removed, I began to find something rather exhilarating in our position. It was such a pleasant change from our usual confinement indoors to be in the open air, and riding over the country at the head of a band of horsemen seemed like acting a part in a fairy tale. All possible adventures might be before us. Mr. Joyce, who knew the natives much better than I did, did not at all share in my pleasurable anticipations. On the contrary, he expressed his belief that our adventures might end very unpleasantly. Quite unconsciously our men presently intimated the same opinion.

The tracks had become so confused that our men were at fault. They halted and held a consultation, which ended by their selecting two of their number to ride before and act as guides. The two men advanced, picked out a track, and as we proceeded along it they began to sing their own praises, and to proclaim their competence to direct the way, in a series of interrogatories addressed to each other. 'Brother,' one of them commenced, 'do we not know the country, when to turn to the right and when to the left, which villages we should enter, and which it would be wise to avoid?' These last words aroused my curiosity. I inquired what they meant by saying that some villages were to be avoided. The men replied with great circumlocution, informing me that in the same manner as the Almighty had created animals of all species, so had He endowed human beings with an infinite variety of dispositions; some were peaceable and submissive to authority, others, when the restraint of the law was removed, 'stretched their necks,' and were defiant to their superiors. In conclusion, they gave me to understand that there were some villages that we had much better leave at a distance.

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parade ground, to the back of the station. We passed through the avenue which bordered the road, and perceived the cause of the light. For miles and miles all along the horizon there stretched a line of fire; in some places it was burning brightly, elsewhere emitting only a dull glow.

The spectacle was so beautiful and so singular that with one accord we pulled up to admire it. Our admiration was mingled with other feelings not so agreeable. The line of fire we conjectured to be the burning Customs' hedge, which was a bank of thorny bushes, lately erected by the Government along the Customs' frontier to prevent the smuggling of salt and opium. The sight did not quite harmonise with the watchman's story. We went on with some misgivings. These misgivings were increased when we reached the station. We came into it near the gaol. From the gardens opposite came the same sort of glow as had proceeded from the duller parts of the burning hedge, and from among the trees appeared patches of sparks that suggested the idea of burning rafters.

From these appearances we concluded that some at least of the houses of the station had been burnt. We halted to deliberate. Just then the horseman next me whispered to me to look where he pointed. I did, and dimly made out the figures of several men lying on the ground as if asleep. I desired our men to surround them. The movement of the horses awoke them, they started up, and finding themselves in a circle of mounted men they seemed paralysed with terror. As they could give no account of themselves I desired one of our men to dismount and pinion them. But while he was looking for a rope, they suddenly darted between the horses, and disappeared as suddenly as if the ground had swallowed them up.

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CHAPTER VIII.

RETURN TO MUTTRA.

As soon as I had told my story, my brother suggested that I had better come with him and repeat it to Mr. Colvin. A drive of a mile or so brought us to Government House, a very large one-storied building, standing in grounds laid out something like an English park, and dotted over with small thorny trees. A crowd of servants in white dresses and gay turbans were seated before the door. As we pulled up several of them ran down the steps, and conducted us through an enclosed verandah that served as a hall into a handsomely furnished drawing-room. An attendant, with a dagger in his waistband and covered with a profusion of broad gold lace, presently entered and announced that Mr. Colvin was at leisure and would see me. So saying and requesting me to follow him, he led the way through several rooms to a large long one on the other side of the house. I entered through the folding doors, and found Mr. Colvin seated at the end of a long table, which was covered with books and papers. At his request I commenced to describe the mutiny of the Bhurtpore army, my flight, and the other occurrences I had witnessed.

As I proceeded in my narrative it struck me that Mr. Colvin was not paying much attention; I soon

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palaces of the nobles of Europe. But, on ordering our dinner, I found that they were destitute of what to us are the most ordinary conveniences. They had neither plates nor dishes, nor, beyond a few tea-cups, did their house contain either glass or china of any other description.

The supply of food was equally limited in variety. We had to make our meal on rice and coarse cakes of unleavened flour, and they were so saturated with oil and some perfume that it was with difficulty I could swallow a few mouthfuls. They could supply us with no drink but water, and milk that had been simmered over a fire, and which had in the process acquired an overpowering flavour of smoke. They procured us some tea, very bad, and an immense tea-pot of solid silver, but the establishment did not contain a kettle, and we had to make the tea with water brought up in brass bowls.

Our dinner over, the Seths' manager was announced. He had come to pay his respects, and to inform us more fully than his masters had done of the state of the city and of the events that had occurred during our absence. This proceeding was in strict conformity with Indian etiquette, which leaves the communication of details to the subordinates. The manager remained some time. When he retired the servants brought us beds—those light ones used by the natives. I had hardly slept for four nights. I was very tired; the cool breeze flowed gently over us, the river murmured below; I was soon asleep. I did not wake till I was aroused by the rays of the rising sun the next morning.

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CHAPTER X.

THE PLUNDERING OF THE TREASURY.

When the treasure was reported laden, Lieutenant Burlton wished good-bye to his companions and left the room where they were assembled. Outside the office the carts were standing ready yoked, the guard drawn up, and the other preparations completed. Mr. Burlton mounted his horse and gave the order to march. The native officer stepped up and said, 'Where?' Mr. Burlton replied, 'To Agra, of course.' The officer turned to the guard and shouted, 'No, no, not to Agra; to Delhi!' Mr. Burlton exclaimed, 'Oh! you traitor!' As the words left his lips he fell dead, shot through the heart. A Sepoy had crept up behind him, and levelled his musket; as Mr. Burlton finished speaking he fired.

This shot was the signal, the guard broke their ranks, and made a rush into the office. How the English who were there escaped I have already related. As they ran off the respectable portion of the crowd fled also. The Sepoys then proceeded to set fire to the building. Its height and solidity made the task difficult. After some failures they succeeded; they made a pile of the chairs and tables, and on it they heaped thatch torn off a neighbouring shed. This they lighted. When the office was well in flames they marched off, taking the treasure with them, and throwing handfuls of copper coins among the mob that had remained.

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return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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CHAPTER II.

THE ASSEMBLING OF THE ARMY.

Bhurtpore is a small independent State, adjoining Muttra on the west. The Rajah had died some four years previously to the occurrence of the events I am relating, and the English Government had assumed charge of the territory till the infant son he had left should come of age. The administration of the State was conducted by an English officer, Major Morrison, who had the title of Agent, and several assistants, of whom the chief was Captain Nixon. Captain Nixon had received early intelligence of the disturbances at Delhi, and had immediately proposed to the Government to make use of the Bhurtpore troops to aid in suppressing them. The proposal had been approved of, and he had been authorised to march the army to Delhi, taking Muttra by the way. From some oversight these orders had not been communicated to me, and I was in consequence unaware of Captain Nixon's approach till about an hour before he entered the station.

As it was supposed that the mutineers were marching down on us, Captain Nixon decided to suspend his advance and await their arrival on the other side of the city, where he proposed to place his troops in position and throw up entrenchments. The city itself was very capable of defence, for it was full of narrow lanes and

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for another hour, and then arrived at a small town, the capital of that part of the district. Here we remained till the surrounding country had been brought to order. During my stay there I became acquainted with Dayby Sing's history and proceedings. They are so illustrative of native habits and of the condition of the country at the time, that an account of them may perhaps even now prove interesting to the reader.

The fourteen villages had, in times gone by, formed a single estate. During the half century of our rule they had been sold and resold, and the proprietors reduced to the condition of mere cultivators. But they still held the tradition of their former supremacy, and looked forward to the time when they might recover it. On the breaking out of the mutiny that time seemed to them to have arrived, and they hastened to avail themselves of it. In each village they rose and turned on the new owners; of these most fled, the rest fought. In these fights Dayby Sing came to the front. The proceedings on neither side were very heroic; there was much firing of matchlocks, a good deal of burning of thatch, a few men killed, more wounded. Eventually, Dayby Sing's fellow caste-men obtained the victory, re-established themselves in their ancient position, and, this done, Dayby Sing elected himself as their Rajah. He then turned his attention to his neighbours, to our Government, and to the Bunniahs.

The Bunniahs, as I have already explained, are a class of traders peculiar to India, at once dealers in grain, grocers, and money-lenders. In the latter capacity they are the most extortionate and pitiless usurers in the world. The leading Bunniahs in the neighbourhood resided in the town, where we were encamped. When Dayby Sing advanced to call them to account he had with him the sympathies of the entire population. This town

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return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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CHAPTER II.

THE ASSEMBLING OF THE ARMY.

BHURTPORE is a small independent State, adjoining Muttra on the west. The Rajah had died some four years previously to the occurrence of the events I am relating, and the English Government had assumed charge of the territory till the infant son he had left should come of age. The administration of the State was conducted by an English officer, Major Morrison, who had the title of Agent, and several assistants, of whom the chief was Captain Nixon. Captain Nixon had received early intelligence of the disturbances at Delhi, and had immediately proposed to the Government to make use of the Bhurtpore troops to aid in suppressing them. The proposal had been approved of, and he had been authorised to march the army to Delhi, taking Muttra by the way. From some oversight these orders had not been communicated to me, and I was in consequence unaware of Captain Nixon's approach till about an hour before he entered the station.

As it was supposed that the mutineers were marching down on us, Captain Nixon decided to suspend his advance and await their arrival on the other side of the city, where he proposed to place his troops in position and throw up entrenchments. The city itself was very capable of defence, for it was full of narrow lanes and

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parade ground, to the back of the station. We passed through the avenue which bordered the road, and perceived the cause of the light. For miles and miles all along the horizon there stretched a line of fire; in some places it was burning brightly, elsewhere emitting only a dull glow.

The spectacle was so beautiful and so singular that with one accord we pulled up to admire it. Our admiration was mingled with other feelings not so agreeable. The line of fire we conjectured to be the burning Customs' hedge, which was a bank of thorny bushes, lately erected by the Government along the Customs' frontier to prevent the smuggling of salt and opium. The sight did not quite harmonise with the watchman's story. We went on with some misgivings. These misgivings were increased when we reached the station. We came into it near the gaol. From the gardens opposite came the same sort of glow as had proceeded from the duller parts of the burning hedge, and from among the trees appeared patches of sparks that suggested the idea of burning rafters.

From these appearances we concluded that some at least of the houses of the station had been burnt. We halted to deliberate. Just then the horseman next me whispered to me to look where he pointed. I did, and dimly made out the figures of several men lying on the ground as if asleep. I desired our men to surround them. The movement of the horses awoke them, they started up, and finding themselves in a circle of mounted men they seemed paralysed with terror. As they could give no account of themselves I desired one of our men to dismount and pinion them. But while he was looking for a rope, they suddenly darted between the horses, and disappeared as suddenly as if the ground had swallowed them up.

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posal, and with infinite bombast said he would start at once to any I might name, burn the houses, and kill the inhabitants. But when I explained that as the villagers were armed and would fight the killing might not be all on one side, his ardour cooled, and he remarked that perhaps he had better remain where he was.

We then discussed military matters of which, notwithstanding his rank in the army, I found he was perfectly ignorant. Nevertheless he regarded himself as much better informed than his fellow chiefs, most of whom he spoke of with contempt as 'mere civilians.' He told me quite plainly that both he and they hated the expedition, and I inferred that they felt no love for Captain Nixon for having suggested it.

As I had nothing else to do, nor he either, we chatted a long time, and I obtained from him much information about the Bhurtpore State and its army. What he said of the army confirmed the impression which, from my own observation, I had formed of it, that it was a mere mob, badly armed, worse disciplined, and commanded by a set of chiefs at once ignorant, cowardly, and full of dissension among themselves. The Ulwar force was more efficient. The artillery was really good, and the cavalry, if they chose to fight, were capable of doing so. As these armies have been so often mentioned in my narrative, it may perhaps be not uninteresting to the reader to learn something of the country from whence they came.

The soil of Upper India diminishes in fertility as it tends to the West. Beyond the Jumna the vegetation becomes less luxuriant. Before many marches are completed the traveller finds himself in a region whose appearance is very much that of a desert. This region is Rajpootana, or 'the land of the Rajpoots,' the caste who chiefly inhabit it. It is about the size of Germany,

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Government was awaiting the course of events, and awaiting them in much anxiety, for we were there in a situation of great peril. A few marches to the south-west was the state of Gwalior. The Rajah was friendly, but the contingent had lately mutinied. It was a formidable force, numbering about ten thousand men, and regarded as the finest and best disciplined body of troops in the whole Bengal army. It had expressed an intention of marching on Agra. The prime minister of the Rajah had dissuaded the leaders from carrying out their intention, but it was uncertain if he would in the future be able to restrain them.

Another army also threatened us. This was the native brigade that had been stationed at Neemuch, a city far away to the west, in the territory of Rajpootana. It had mutinied like the rest, and after plundering the treasury had commenced to march, it was supposed, for Delhi. But on this point doubts had for some time arisen. The route they had taken would lead equally to Agra, and it was now uncertain if, after all, Agra was not really their destination. The uncertainty was causing all at Agra great anxiety, not a little apprehension; for if this rebel army did come we had but a very small force wherewith to meet it. After much debate, much hesitation, the Government had at length decided to increase their forces by calling in the Kotah contingent, and the order was issued that caused Captain Dennys and his officers so great gratification. Their gratification was a little modified by a second order, which almost immediately followed, and which forbade the contingent to cross the river. Captain Dennys was directed to remain encamped on the eastern bank of the Jumna till the destination of the Neemuch mutineers was positively ascertained.

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some villages there were similar feuds between the different clans composing the population. These feuds, after slumbering for half a century, were now revived and fought out.

Three weeks had hardly elapsed since the commencement of the mutiny, but in that short period a large portion of the district had lapsed into anarchy. Order was only maintained in the towns, and in those few portions of the country where the ancient proprietors still held possession of their villages.

After leaving Kosee, the Bhurtpore and Ulwar armies had marched on one stage to a village named 'Hodul,' and there they had since remained. The chiefs did not openly say that they would go no further, but each day they found some fresh excuse for not doing so. The time had now arrived when the guard was to be relieved at Muttra, which it usually was at the expiration of every second month. In consequence of my report of the misconduct of the present guard, one of their English officers had been sent to take charge of them; the officer selected was a young lieutenant of the name of Burlton—he was at present a guest in my house.

I had repeatedly warned the Government that the guard would probably mutiny so soon as it was reinforced by the relieving company, and I had recommended that the temptation to do so should be removed by previously sending the treasure into Agra. To these warnings and to this recommendation no attention had been paid. The Government expressed themselves convinced of the loyalty of the Sepoys, and treated my apprehensions as groundless alarms.

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parade ground, to the back of the station. We passed through the avenue which bordered the road, and perceived the cause of the light. For miles and miles all along the horizon there stretched a line of fire; in some places it was burning brightly, elsewhere emitting only a dull glow.

The spectacle was so beautiful and so singular that with one accord we pulled up to admire it. Our admiration was mingled with other feelings not so agreeable. The line of fire we conjectured to be the burning Customs' hedge, which was a bank of thorny bushes, lately erected by the Government along the Customs' frontier to prevent the smuggling of salt and opium. The sight did not quite harmonise with the watchman's story. We went on with some misgivings. These misgivings were increased when we reached the station. We came into it near the gaol. From the gardens opposite came the same sort of glow as had proceeded from the duller parts of the burning hedge, and from among the trees appeared patches of sparks that suggested the idea of burning rafters.

From these appearances we concluded that some at least of the houses of the station had been burnt. We halted to deliberate. Just then the horseman next me whispered to me to look where he pointed. I did, and dimly made out the figures of several men lying on the ground as if asleep. I desired our men to surround them. The movement of the horses awoke them, they started up, and finding themselves in a circle of mounted men they seemed paralysed with terror. As they could give no account of themselves I desired one of our men to dismount and pinion them. But while he was looking for a rope, they suddenly darted between the horses, and disappeared as suddenly as if the ground had swallowed them up.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MIDNIGHT RIDE.

I AND Mr. Joyce rode side by side, two men in advance, the remainder following in double file. It was nearly full moon, but the sky was concealed by a canopy of clouds too thick for its rays to penetrate; as we advanced beyond the space illuminated by the glare of the torches we plunged into darkness.

The streets were silent and deserted; their silence impressed us with a feeling of awe. It seemed but a few minutes since we had seen them full of life. The houses on either side were dimly visible. The canopy of clouds seemed to rest on their summits, giving to the street the appearance of a covered passage. We passed one or two watchmen, who challenged us. The men in advance replied that we were horsemen of the Government going to patrol the road. On reaching the city gates the same explanation was given. The sentry knew the men; he opened the gate and let us pass without further inquiry. It was with a feeling of relief that we found ourselves again in the open country. We were no longer as it were in a cage, and, whatever happened, we could at least make a run for our lives. It presently began to rain—the falling rain cooled the air. I took advantage of the coolness to put our horses to a canter, which we continued till we reached the cantonments. At the

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to proceed, so I thought, from some burning village. Such sights had of late been too common to cause surprise; Mr. Joyce did not appear satisfied with my explanation. He asked me if I did not think that the light came from the direction of Agra. I thought not—it was too much to the left; besides, we were thirty miles from Agra, and in so flat a country no light would be visible at that distance.

To this last remark Mr. Joyce assented, but, nevertheless, in a tone as if he was still not entirely convinced. The clouds then closed again, shut out the light, and put an end to our discussion. We rode on in silence.

We had ridden on for half a mile or so, when we heard behind us the clatter of horses' hoofs, and the tinkling of a bell; we halted, and were presently joined by a further party of their horsemen whom the Seths had sent after us. These were the men for whom we had waited. They had arrived at the Seths' house soon after we left, and had been desired by their masters to follow us. With them had come also some more of my horsemen, and a camel rider of the Seths'. It was the bell attached to the camel's neck whose tinkling we had heard.

These men were a welcome addition to our party. They raised it to over forty persons; a number quite sufficient to repel any attack from the villagers, and to force our way through any straggling body of mutineers we might happen to encounter.

We now approached a village named Badh. As the inhabitants bore an evil reputation we advanced to it with all precaution. At the end of the village a small picket of horse had been recently stationed. Their duty was to patrol the road. We found them all in the guard-house and fast asleep. I had them awoke, and desired them to saddle their horses and accompany us.

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By this time they had been recognised by the Seths' horsemen. The conversation became more familiar, and the camel riders more communicative. They informed us that they had been as far as the rebel army, and that it was advancing on Agra. Here Dillawar took up the conversation, and asked if the road to Agra was quiet. 'Quite quiet' was the reply. Our spirits rose. The answer to the next inquiry effectually depressed them. 'Were any of the enemy on the road?' 'Yes, plenty; they had pickets all along it. There was a detachment of a hundred and twenty horsemen in the town of Furrah just ahead; we had better avoid it.'

No more questions were asked; the riders wished our men farewell, jerked the camel's nose-string, the huge creature broke into a shambling trot, and disappeared in the darkness.

This information about the pickets struck us with consternation. If they were all along the road it would be hardly possible to escape them. Our horsemen proposed that we should return to Muttra. To this proposal I at once refused to listen, and it was well that I did so. I felt convinced that our only chance of safety lay in our reaching Agra.

Having decided to proceed, we consulted how to get past the picket before us. Dillawar Khan informed us that we should presently come to a lane which branched off to the right. He proposed that we should turn into this lane; after making a considerable circuit it would bring us again into the high road, some miles nearer Agra. This seemed the best course, and we resolved to adopt it.

A ride of a mile brought us to the lane. I was much disconcerted to find, as we entered it, that it was the disused high road, which, long neglected, was now full of

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return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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horsemen of the Emperor carrying dispatches to the army, and demanding what he meant by stopping us.

The trooper was taken by surprise. Seeing us come galloping towards him, he hurriedly got his horse to one side to avoid being ridden over. Before he recovered himself we were out of sight. We heard him shout, and heard voices answer him; but either he took us for friends, or his comrades were too lazy to follow. Anyhow, when we pulled up again we found that we were not pursued.

The avenue presently recommenced, and in accordance to what we had arranged, we rode under the trees on the left side. We had not proceeded far when we heard the tramp of horses, and a party of mutineer cavalry passed us riding along the central portion of the road. One of them challenged us; we made no answer, they passed on. Half a mile further we met another troop of mutineers. Like ourselves they were riding on a side avenue, and fortunately for us it was the one on the side opposite.

The stream of prisoners had been gradually getting smaller. We came on the prisoners at longer intervals, and then in fewer numbers. After we had passed this last troop of mutineers they ceased for a while altogether.

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sounds of movement inside the hut. In a minute or two the Fukkeer came out of the hut and handed the guide a bowl of water and a small hookah ; we could see the glow of the charcoal as he passed it. The guide drank the water, drew a puff or two from the hookah, and then inquired if all was well in front, and if he could proceed in safety.

We listened eagerly for the answer. It came as follows, 'All is well, my son, go on without fear ; you will meet with no enemy.' We were elated, we did not at the moment consider to whom the term enemy was applied. We were shortly enlightened. The Fukkeer, who appeared very good-natured and communicative, proceeded to inform the horseman that the rebel army had advanced in the afternoon towards Agra, that the English soldiers had come out to meet them, that a battle had ensued, and the English had been beaten and had fled into the fort.

While the Fukkeer was talking a traveller came up and joined in the conversation ; he confirmed the truth of the Fukkeer's story, and added some further particulars of his own. Among others, that the rebel army was besieging the fort, and had already knocked down one of the bastions.

In their eagerness to hear our men had advanced their horses. Some movement attracted the Fukkeer's notice ; he looked up, startled, and pointing in our direction, inquired of the guide in a frightened tone 'who those men were.' The guide replied that they were his companions, also troopers of the Emperor. After some further conversation Dillawar Khan whispered to me that we had better leave. I moved on my horse, and after some difficulty the rest followed, the guide wishing the Fukkeer farewell.

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would take a terrible vengeance, and that utter destruction would fall on them and on their house. Urged thus by their manager, the Seths went down to their guards, and by threats, persuasions, and some display of force they succeeded at length in inducing the men to abandon their design.

It was this that caused the confusion in the house, I had noticed, the delay in the arrival of the escort, and the agitation of the Seths themselves during their interview with me. Disappointed thus in their intention to murder us all on the terrace, the guards next proposed to kill me and Mr. Joyce as we left the house. They had arranged to cut us down as we stooped to pass through the small doorway in the barricade. It was to prevent their doing so that the Seths had insisted on accompanying us to the street, and lest the men should follow us that they sent some of their most trustworthy servants to see us safely out of the city.

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ordinary English use. With these last we should have been better supplied but for an excess of patriotism on the part of the volunteers who accompanied the column. They smashed to pieces the contents of the shop of a Mohammedan tradesman, who dealt in European goods, but who had joined the rebels. It was felt afterwards that it would have equally punished the tradesman, and been of more benefit to us, if the articles, instead of being destroyed, had been brought into the fort, and either sold or distributed.

Having concluded my description of our first few days in the fort, I will now give the reader a brief account of the events that had obliged us to take refuge within it.

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recommended that the fort should be provisioned and placed in a state of defence, and that on the approach of the enemy the women, children, and other non-combatants should be sent into it, leaving the troops free to act. Mr. Drummond's measures were supported by the leading civil officials; the proposals of the military authorities by nearly all the rest of the English. Between these conflicting counsels Mr. Colvin was unable to decide. Finally, he permitted each side to have partly their own way. There resulted a confusion which, had it not occurred, might have been deemed impossible under such a Government as ours.

Mr. Drummond had received permission to raise additional police, and also to supply them with arms from the magazine. He availed himself of this permission to an extent that ere long excited general alarm. The police were increased till they constituted a force many times larger than the regular troops. No less then seven thousand muskets and two hundred thousand rounds of ammunition were served out to them. These police, hastily raised, were entirely undisciplined, their characters and antecedents often unknown. The presence of such an armed mob was regarded by the military authorities, as well as the English generally, as a possible source of great danger. The uneasiness felt was increased by rumours that arose that these new police were entirely disaffected, and were prepared, should the enemy approach, to turn against us.

Representations were made to Mr. Colvin; he was urged, and in the stronges manner, to disarm the police, or at least to reduce their number, but in vain.

Mr. Drummond, like most civilians of that time, was partial to Mohammedans. He bestowed his patronage almost exclusively on them. His personal attendants and

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posal, and with infinite bombast said he would start at once to any I might name, burn the houses, and kill the inhabitants. But when I explained that as the villagers were armed and would fight the killing might not be all on one side, his ardour cooled, and he remarked that perhaps he had better remain where he was.

We then discussed military matters of which, notwithstanding his rank in the army, I found he was perfectly ignorant. Nevertheless he regarded himself as much better informed than his fellow chiefs, most of whom he spoke of with contempt as 'mere civilians.' He told me quite plainly that both he and they hated the expedition, and I inferred that they felt no love for Captain Nixon for having suggested it.

As I had nothing else to do, nor he either, we chatted a long time, and I obtained from him much information about the Bhurtpore State and its army. What he said of the army confirmed the impression which, from my own observation, I had formed of it, that it was a mere mob, badly armed, worse disciplined, and commanded by a set of chiefs at once ignorant, cowardly, and full of dissension among themselves. The Ulwar force was more efficient. The artillery was really good, and the cavalry, if they chose to fight, were capable of doing so. As these armies have been so often mentioned in my narrative, it may perhaps be not uninteresting to the reader to learn something of the country from whence they came.

The soil of Upper India diminishes in fertility as it tends to the West. Beyond the Jumna the vegetation becomes less luxuriant. Before many marches are completed the traveller finds himself in a region whose appearance is very much that of a desert. This region is Rajpootana, or 'the land of the Rajpoots,' the caste who chiefly inhabit it. It is about the size of Germany,

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parade ground, to the back of the station. We passed through the avenue which bordered the road, and perceived the cause of the light. For miles and miles all along the horizon there stretched a line of fire; in some places it was burning brightly, elsewhere emitting only a dull glow.

The spectacle was so beautiful and so singular that with one accord we pulled up to admire it. Our admiration was mingled with other feelings not so agreeable. The line of fire we conjectured to be the burning Customs' hedge, which was a bank of thorny bushes, lately erected by the Government along the Customs' frontier to prevent the smuggling of salt and opium. The sight did not quite harmonise with the watchman's story. We went on with some misgivings. These misgivings were increased when we reached the station. We came into it near the gaol. From the gardens opposite came the same sort of glow as had proceeded from the duller parts of the burning hedge, and from among the trees appeared patches of sparks that suggested the idea of burning rafters.

From these appearances we concluded that some at least of the houses of the station had been burnt. We halted to deliberate. Just then the horseman next me whispered to me to look where he pointed. I did, and dimly made out the figures of several men lying on the ground as if asleep. I desired our men to surround them. The movement of the horses awoke them, they started up, and finding themselves in a circle of mounted men they seemed paralysed with terror. As they could give no account of themselves I desired one of our men to dismount and pinion them. But while he was looking for a rope, they suddenly darted between the horses, and disappeared as suddenly as if the ground had swallowed them up.

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return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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the station, burning and destroying. But in the city, save that the Christians were murdered, there was no disorder. Even in the station the residences of Hindoos and Mohammedans were scrupulously unmolested. On the fourth day our troops issued, and the authority of the English Government was restored.

NOTE.—Since the above account of the battle was written I have been informed by an officer who was present that the supply of ammunition with which the artillery started was that ordinarily taken, and that it would have been sufficient had not the General, by his inaction, compelled it to be so uselessly expended. Still, I believe it is quite true, as I have stated, that more ammunition was ordered to follow, and that the General refused to delay his retreat for its arrival.

I should add, that the same officer tells me that I must have been misinformed as to any proposal for taking out the heavy guns, as the doing so, under the circumstances, was impossible.

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sounds of movement inside the hut. In a minute or two the Fukkeer came out of the hut and handed the guide a bowl of water and a small hookah; we could see the glow of the charcoal as he passed it. The guide drank the water, drew a puff or two from the hookah, and then inquired if all was well in front, and if he could proceed in safety.

We listened eagerly for the answer. It came as follows, 'All is well, my son, go on without fear; you will meet with no enemy.' We were elated, we did not at the moment consider to whom the term enemy was applied. We were shortly enlightened. The Fukkeer, who appeared very good-natured and communicative, proceeded to inform the horseman that the rebel army had advanced in the afternoon towards Agra, that the English soldiers had come out to meet them, that a battle had ensued, and the English had been beaten and had fled into the fort.

While the Fukkeer was talking a traveller came up and joined in the conversation; he confirmed the truth of the Fukkeer's story, and added some further particulars of his own. Among others, that the rebel army was besieging the fort, and had already knocked down one of the bastions.

In their eagerness to hear our men had advanced their horses. Some movement attracted the Fukkeer's notice; he looked up, startled, and pointing in our direction, inquired of the guide in a frightened tone 'who those men were.' The guide replied that they were his companions, also troopers of the Emperor. After some further conversation Dillawar Khan whispered to me that we had better leave. I moved on my horse, and after some difficulty the rest followed, the guide wishing the Fukkeer farewell.

There are other buildings besides those I have described, especially an immense range of enclosures near the Delhi gate. They do not, however, with one exception, possess much interest; that exception is the 'Motee Muzjeed,' or the 'Pearl Mosque,' but to do justice to this exquisite structure a separate chapter would be required.

The French traveller Tavernier visited the fort of Agra about the middle of our seventeenth century. The Court was absent, the Emperor being on one of his progresses, and the 'Killahdar,' or governor of the fortress, permitted Tavernier to enter a part of the palace. Tavernier saw the 'Peacock Throne' and also the 'Golden Vine,' and he mentions the name of the Portuguese artist who had constructed it. Tavernier describes what he saw apparently very accurately, but so much has the appearance of the interior been since changed by ruin and alterations, that I never could clearly make out either by which gateway he entered or into what portions of the palace he was admitted.

When Shah Jehan removed his capital to Delhi he carried the 'Peacock Throne' with him. For nearly a century it there remained, resting in a very similar marble alcove in the audience hall of the new palace. In the year 1745 it was carried away to Persia by Nadir Shah, on his capture of Delhi. The throne was broken up, some of the precious stones that composed it found their way back to India; but the greater portion are still in the possession of the Shah of Persia. The fate of the 'Golden Vine' is not recorded, and, strange to say, among the natives there is now no tradition of its existence that I know of.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LIFE IN THE FORT.

For the first few days after our entering it the fort had resembled a disturbed ants' nest. The courts and squares were filled with people asking and telling news, or bustling about with no definite object. We had now quieted down, and fallen into a sort of life very like that on board ship during a long voyage. There was the same monotony, the same sociability; I am sorry to add, also, the same gossip and quarrelling.

Through Colonel Fraser's kindness we had obtained better quarters; they were in a small pavilion of white marble overlooking the river—a fantastic little structure, surmounted by an oblong dome, thickly overlaid with gold. It was situated in an enclosure paved with white marble, and was separated from the rest of the square by a screen of tall slabs of the same material. In ancient times it had been the residence of some princess, and for such no doubt was well adapted. For an English family it was less suitable; it contained but three rooms, in size mere closets—two were assigned to us, the third was given to a lady from Gwalior, one of the many whom the mutiny had made widows. The heat of the rooms was beyond words, and the polished marble of the pavement reflected an almost blinding glare. To these discomforts were added a very plague of flies, and what

in such a building would not have been expected, of fleas also. The flies and the glare we managed in some degree to exclude by hanging curtains and erecting a verandah of reeds and thatch. But the fleas we could neither get rid of nor diminish—they were as numerous and annoying the last day of our residence as on the first. Where they came from was a mystery, as also was where they hid in the solid masonry, and on what they subsisted previous to our entrance.

But let me describe our life. We all rose early. Those who had horses or vehicles rode or drove—never, however, venturing far from the fort; the rest strolled about the squares or walked on the ramparts. By seven o'clock most of us had returned, by eight o'clock the palace had subsided into the sleepy quiet it maintained for the remainder of the day.

About four we dined, and dinner over, we rolled up the curtains and sat by the window till the diminishing glare enabled us to take our evening stroll.

From our window we looked on the river. Swollen by the rains, it resembled a broad, long lake ; below the fort the stream made so sharp a curve that the bank remained in sight for a considerable distance. It was lined with the ruins of what had once been palaces, but were now mere masses of shapeless masonry. Amid them, pure white and glistening, rose the 'Taj.' Contrasted with the mouldering walls beside it, it seemed the embodiment of youth and freshness, suggesting the idea of life amid decay. It was more than a mile from where we sat, but so clear was the atmosphere that every detail of its architecture was distinctly visible. We could see the delicate cupolas that cluster around the central dome, the coloured mosaics that adorn the walls, even the marble traceries that fill the windows. Beyond the river

return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

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to proceed, so I thought, from some burning village. Such sights had of late been too common to cause surprise; Mr. Joyce did not appear satisfied with my explanation. He asked me if I did not think that the light came from the direction of Agra. I thought not—it was too much to the left; besides, we were thirty miles from Agra, and in so flat a country no light would be visible at that distance.

To this last remark Mr. Joyce assented, but, nevertheless, in a tone as if he was still not entirely convinced. The clouds then closed again, shut out the light, and put an end to our discussion. We rode on in silence.

We had ridden on for half a mile or so, when we heard behind us the clatter of horses' hoofs, and the tinkling of a bell; we halted, and were presently joined by a further party of their horsemen whom the Seths had sent after us. These were the men for whom we had waited. They had arrived at the Seths' house soon after we left, and had been desired by their masters to follow us. With them had come also some more of my horsemen, and a camel rider of the Seths'. It was the bell attached to the camel's neck whose tinkling we had heard.

These men were a welcome addition to our party. They raised it to over forty persons; a number quite sufficient to repel any attack from the villagers, and to force our way through any straggling body of mutineers we might happen to encounter.

We now approached a village named Badh. As the inhabitants bore an evil reputation we advanced to it with all precaution. At the end of the village a small picket of horse had been recently stationed. Their duty was to patrol the road. We found them all in the guard-house and fast asleep. I had them awoke, and desired them to saddle their horses and accompany us.

had not been very gracious. The order, it was said, was harshly worded, and its harshness was not softened by the mode of its delivery. The dispatch was addressed to Mr. Colvin. Mr. Colvin was a man kind in heart, but not sympathetic, nor always very considerate in manner. He sent for the General, and received him—I am only repeating the story as I heard it—in the presence of other officers, and abruptly handed him the dispatch. The General took it with a smile, not the least anticipating its contents. He read it, turned very pale, and appeared as if about to faint; he recovered himself, and behaved with much dignity. He rose, handed back the letter to Mr. Colvin, bowed, and left the room.

Colonel Cotton's appointment was followed by many of those improvements in the order and cleanliness of the fort that I have already mentioned; and also (though the two matters were unconnected) by an investigation into the conduct of the Agra native officials. Most of these had had the good sense to leave at the same time as the police; a few, either innocent or over-confident, had remained, and were now arrested and placed on their trial. One was hung. Regarding the rest there commenced a renewal of those altercations between the authorities that previous to the battle had caused so much scandal, and been the occasion of so much disaster. Into the particulars of these disputes I will not, however, at present enter. Our attention was soon diverted from them by the more interesting subjects of seeking for hidden treasure and the exploration of subterranean passages.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SECRET PASSAGES.

THE policy that had been adopted regarding the Muttra treasure had been followed in the other districts surrounding Agra. The treasure had been left in the districts to show confidence in the Sepoys, and the Sepoys had repaid the confidence by carrying the treasure off to Delhi. As a result we had come into the fort but slenderly provided with money. There was not in the treasure chests quite sixty thousand pounds in copper and rupees; and this sum, though a sufficient fortune enough for an individual, was entirely inadequate for the requirements of the Government, even for a limited period.

There did not appear, however, any present prospect of its being augmented. No revenue to speak of was being paid in, and the credit of the Government was too bad just then to enable it to raise a loan. If money was to be got it must be obtained by other means; it was thought just possible that these other means might prove successful.

The fort of Agra had once contained half the wealth of India—gold and silver incalculable. Natives are addicted to hiding their riches. It was conjectured that in secret vaults under the ground, or in recesses of the

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as a rock. It took days to pierce it. Each day our expectations rose. They were sadly disappointed; for, having reached the bottom, we found neither vault, passage, nor concealed entrance—only the bare earth on which the foundations rested.

Our further efforts I will not chronicle, they resulted only in ridicule for their originators.

After an interval, however, our subterranean researches were resumed; but they were now undertaken for objects more immediately practical, and were conducted in a more regular and systematic manner.

It was known that the fort was honeycombed with underground passages. It was conjectured that some of them had exits beyond the walls. Our doubts on this matter had, during the days of our imaginary siege, caused us much anxiety. It was resolved to remove for the future such cause of apprehension by a thorough exploration of the vaults and galleries. This resolution, when it became known, afforded general satisfaction. It was felt that the explorations would conduce to our safety. It was hoped they would also gratify our love of the marvellous; that the workmen might come on some of the buried treasures, in which we still wished to believe, or that they might discover some explanation of the two traditionary mysteries of the palace,—the fate of 'the four soldiers' and the meaning of 'the vault of the skeleton.'

Some years before the mutiny the officer at the fort happened to be lying awake when the sentries were relieved. Relieving guard with the old Sepoys was always a tedious business. The outgoing sentry enumerated, in a droning voice, all the different articles under his charge, and all the various directions he had received from his predecessor. The officer was falling

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He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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CHAPTER XVI.

A MIDNIGHT RIDE.

I AND Mr. Joyce rode side by side, two men in advance, the remainder following in double file. It was nearly full moon, but the sky was concealed by a canopy of clouds too thick for its rays to penetrate; as we advanced beyond the space illuminated by the glare of the torches we plunged into darkness.

The streets were silent and deserted; their silence impressed us with a feeling of awe. It seemed but a few minutes since we had seen them full of life. The houses on either side were dimly visible. The canopy of clouds seemed to rest on their summits, giving to the street the appearance of a covered passage. We passed one or two watchmen, who challenged us. The men in advance replied that we were horsemen of the Government going to patrol the road. On reaching the city gates the same explanation was given. The sentry knew the men; he opened the gate and let us pass without further inquiry. It was with a feeling of relief that we found ourselves again in the open country. We were no longer as it were in a cage, and, whatever happened, we could at least make a run for our lives. It presently began to rain—the falling rain cooled the air. I took advantage of the coolness to put our horses to a canter, which we continued till we reached the cantonments. At the

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We had now, we thought, got beyond fear of pursuit, and our apprehensions removed, I began to find something rather exhilarating in our position. It was such a pleasant change from our usual confinement indoors to be in the open air, and riding over the country at the head of a band of horsemen seemed like acting a part in a fairy tale. All possible adventures might be before us. Mr. Joyce, who knew the natives much better than I did, did not at all share in my pleasurable anticipations. On the contrary, he expressed his belief that our adventures might end very unpleasantly. Quite unconsciously our men presently intimated the same opinion.

The tracks had become so confused that our men were at fault. They halted and held a consultation, which ended by their selecting two of their number to ride before and act as guides. The two men advanced, picked out a track, and as we proceeded along it they began to sing their own praises, and to proclaim their competence to direct the way, in a series of interrogatories addressed to each other. 'Brother,' one of them commenced, 'do we not know the country, when to turn to the right and when to the left, which villages we should enter, and which it would be wise to avoid?' These last words aroused my curiosity. I inquired what they meant by saying that some villages were to be avoided. The men replied with great circumlocution, informing me that in the same manner as the Almighty had created animals of all species, so had He endowed human beings with an infinite variety of dispositions; some were peaceable and submissive to authority, others, when the restraint of the law was removed, 'stretched their necks,' and were defiant to their superiors. In conclusion, they gave me to understand that there were some villages that we had much better leave at a distance.

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by Europeans; General Perron, a Frenchman, was their commander-in-chief, and under him General Hessing, a Dutchman, was for many years Governor of the province of Agra and Commandant of the fort. He resided in the palace, in the apartments, so I was told by his grandson, now occupied by Mr. Colvin. In the vaults below he hid away his accumulations, which are supposed to have amounted to many lacs of rupees. The rest of the palace was left to the owls and the bats, and the older portions began to fall slowly to decay. The city, for the most part, had already become a heap of ruins.

The natives have a proverb that three things bring together a population: a river, the rain, and the monarch ('Dirreou, Bâdul, Badshah'). Agra exemplified the truth of the saying. It was the presence of the Court that had brought the inhabitants, and when the Court left they followed it. About the year 1784 Warren Hastings, then Governor-General of Bengal, sent an embassy to the titular Emperor, Shah Alum, who was then a prisoner, under guise of a guest, in the Mahratta camp, near Muttra.

The embassy started from Bombay, and passed through Agra on their way. The appearance of the city struck them with a melancholy wonder. They rode through miles of streets, passed palaces, caravanserais, market-places, mosques, and grand gateways, but saw never an inhabitant. The ordinary houses had fallen to pieces, the finer buildings were in every stage of decay.

The Mahrattas held possession of Agra, and their garrisons occupied the fort, and its commandants the palace, for nearly half a century, and then their time arrived. General Perron, driven by Lord Lake out of the Doab, retreated on Agra, and took refuge in the fort. Lord Lake followed with his English army, and planted

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loyalty. The rest of the English and Christians were much exasperated against them. A fresh contention arose, in which, except among the engineers, the military question was rather lost sight of. One party would have been glad to see the mosque destroyed because it was a mosque; the other party for that reason desired to preserve it.

The engineers were firm, and they so clearly had common sense on their side that the civil authorities in the end felt obliged to yield. That they might do so gracefully, they proposed to procure a 'futwah,' or judgment from the Cazee, which would, they represented, be a justification for the demolition in the eyes of the other Mohammedans. The military authorities, so the gossip went, gave them to understand that, if it gratified them to procure the 'futwah,' they of course could do so. But all the same, 'futwah' or no 'futwah,' the mosque should come down.

The reply was not encouraging—nevertheless the 'futwah' was procured. I did not see it, but I heard the contents; and as my informant was the Cazee himself, I imagine I heard them correctly. The 'futwah' sanctioned the demolition on the strength of a precedent of the Emperor Alumgire, that pious monarch, when at war with the Mahrattas, having pulled down a mosque that sheltered them from the fire of his artillery—the doctors of the law having declared that the Almighty would pardon the removal of His temple for so worthy an object as the destruction of His enemies.

The precedent was hardly in point, as it was the preservation, not the destruction, of the unbelievers for which the removal of the building was now desired. However, in the satisfaction of obtaining the 'futwah,' this defect was prudently overlooked.

Beyond the civil authorities the 'futwah' did not

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reason, therefore, why he should not collect news as well as another. Nevertheless, the fact of his being employed for the purpose created much amusement; was made the subject of many jokes and caricatures, and, though very unjustly, added to the low estimation in which the intelligence of the committee was already regarded.

The Government intelligence being so defective, several officials endeavoured to supplement it. The most successful was Captain Nixon. He had a natural aptitude for the work, and he had also at his disposal the Bhurtpore establishment of trained messengers, who in a native court are usually very efficient. Captain Nixon's information was generally both the earliest and the most correct. Being so, it would have been wise in the authorities to have availed themselves of it. They endeavoured instead to prevent his receiving it. It was contemplated, indeed, at one time to procure his removal, but difficulties appearing in the way of assigning sufficient reasons the idea was abandoned.

The efforts of the other officials were not more favourably regarded; the Government accepted no information save what was submitted by the Department; and the Department received none that was not supplied by their own employés, the blind man in particular. A time came when early and accurate intelligence was essential to our safety; and then, as I shall relate, this course of procedure nearly produced a terrible catastrophe.

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return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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In this cheerfulness, in these anticipations, there was one person, and that the chief among us, who did not share. Mr. Colvin had entered the fort fully persuaded that he should never leave it; each day increased his depression, any improvements in our prospects he regarded only as a prelude to fresh disasters. It seemed, in a few days, as if his forebodings would be realised. Delhi did not fall, but, on the contrary, there came news from Lahore that there was a possibility that the Punjab might follow the example of these provinces, and rise also in rebellion. If the Punjab rose our position would be all but desperate; for the rising of the Punjab would almost certainly be followed by an advance of the Gwalior contingent. We should be besieged then in reality, and we might not be able to hold out till assistance arrived from England. The outlook was again gloomy—it made us all anxious; it plunged Mr. Colvin into a still deeper depression. His depression was increased by other incidents that presently occurred.

return to Agra with the treasure so soon as it was ready. The making over the treasure was always a long business. To expedite it, my assistants had gone early to the office, and there breakfasted in company with Mr. Burlton and Mr. Gibbon; breakfast over, they returned to the treasury, leaving their guns piled in a corner of the room in which they had had the meal. The rupees had been counted, packed, and the other formalities completed. It was then about one o'clock in the afternoon. The treasure carts being reported laden, Mr. Burlton wished the others good-bye, and went out to join his men.

He had not been gone more than a minute or two when the sound of a shot was heard; it was followed by a rush of Sepoys into the office. What happened next none of the party could exactly remember; they ran for their guns but found them gone. The breakfast-room opened into another and a larger room; into this they fled, the Sepoys following and firing at them. They heard the bullets strike the walls, but none hit them. The windows of the room happened fortunately to be open; they rushed through them, jumped off the verandah, and ran for their lives across the office grounds to a garden full of trees that lay beyond.

The Sepoys followed them part of the way firing all the while, but being armed with the old heavy musket and not very good marksmen their bullets went wide. In the garden the party collected. It consisted of Mr. Colvin, his fellow-assistant, Mr. Dashwood, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Joyce, and two of the under-clerks, named Hashman. All had escaped injury except Mr. Gibbon, who had received a bayonet thrust in his left hand.

The garden was situated on the river; they descended the bank, and made their way along the shore to the city.

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CHAPTER XVI.

A MIDNIGHT RIDE.

I AND Mr. Joyce rode side by side, two men in advance, the remainder following in double file. It was nearly full moon, but the sky was concealed by a canopy of clouds too thick for its rays to penetrate; as we advanced beyond the space illuminated by the glare of the torches we plunged into darkness.

The streets were silent and deserted; their silence impressed us with a feeling of awe. It seemed but a few minutes since we had seen them full of life. The houses on either side were dimly visible. The canopy of clouds seemed to rest on their summits, giving to the street the appearance of a covered passage. We passed one or two watchmen, who challenged us. The men in advance replied that we were horsemen of the Government going to patrol the road. On reaching the city gates the same explanation was given. The sentry knew the men; he opened the gate and let us pass without further inquiry. It was with a feeling of relief that we found ourselves again in the open country. We were no longer as it were in a cage, and, whatever happened, we could at least make a run for our lives. It presently began to rain—the falling rain cooled the air. I took advantage of the coolness to put our horses to a canter, which we continued till we reached the cantonments. At the

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CHAPTER XXIII.

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among themselves. Colonel Fraser, indeed, ordered in our detachment of English soldiers that was still on the other side of the Jumna, and he dispatched an express to Colonel Greathed explaining our situation and begging him to come to our assistance. So far as Colonel Fraser had the power, I believe he also ordered him to do so, but beyond this nothing was done. The militia were allowed to remain out at the Metcalfe, and were not even provided with the proper means of defending the position should the rebel army attack it.

As to the whereabouts of that army nothing certain was known, and no sensible means were adopted to ascertain. The Intelligence Department maintained that the rebels were recrossing the Khara Nuddeé, and going off to the Deccan. But then the Department relied entirely on the information supplied by their own agents, and there was reason to fear that their agents, either from ignorance or design, were deceiving them. Many natives, very reliable, had expressed their belief that the rebel force was still on our side the Khara Nuddeé, and much nearer to us than the authorities had any idea of.

These statements were communicated to the Government, but met with no attention, nor was more regard paid to the representations of the officer commanding the militia. This officer bore the highest character for good sense, courage, and knowledge of his profession. He had expressed his opinion that the enemy were near, and that his position was unsafe, and he had supported this opinion by facts that ought to have aroused attention: among others, that strange cavalry had been seen very near the parade ground, and that some of his men when patrolling the Gwalior road, which led to the Khara Nuddeé, had been chased in by them.

Colonel Cotton was brave to rashness, he thoroughly

by Europeans; General Perron, a Frenchman, was their commander-in-chief, and under him General Hessing, a Dutchman, was for many years Governor of the province of Agra and Commandant of the fort. He resided in the palace, in the apartments, so I was told by his grandson, now occupied by Mr. Colvin. In the vaults below he hid away his accumulations, which are supposed to have amounted to many lacs of rupees. The rest of the palace was left to the owls and the bats, and the older portions began to fall slowly to decay. The city, for the most part, had already become a heap of ruins.

The natives have a proverb that three things bring together a population: a river, the rain, and the monarch ('Dirreou, Bâdul, Badshah'). Agra exemplified the truth of the saying. It was the presence of the Court that had brought the inhabitants, and when the Court left they followed it. About the year 1784 Warren Hastings, then Governor-General of Bengal, sent an embassy to the titular Emperor, Shah Alum, who was then a prisoner, under guise of a guest, in the Mahratta camp, near Muttra.

The embassy started from Bombay, and passed through Agra on their way. The appearance of the city struck them with a melancholy wonder. They rode through miles of streets, passed palaces, caravanserais, market-places, mosques, and grand gateways, but saw never an inhabitant. The ordinary houses had fallen to pieces, the finer buildings were in every stage of decay.

The Mahrattas held possession of Agra, and their garrisons occupied the fort, and its commandants the palace, for nearly half a century, and then their time arrived. General Perron, driven by Lord Lake out of the Doab, retreated on Agra, and took refuge in the fort. Lord Lake followed with his English army, and planted

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they had been for the last three days bivouacked within a mile and a half of the fort, concealed in the gardens and among the high crops that enclosed the parade ground.

While we were talking who should come up but the blind man, led by his attendant; he informed us that he was on his way to the Intelligence Office with some most important information. Supposing that it was the latest news from the battle, we begged him to tell us. Always polite he stopped, and said that he had just learnt on reliable authority that the Indore mutineers had not really left for the Deccan, but were still this side the Khara Nuddeé, and might very possibly approach the fort.

The shout of laughter that greeted this announcement did not in the least discompose its deliverer. Nor could we persuade him that the engagement now going on rendered the communication of his intelligence no longer necessary. Guided by his attendant the old man passed on to the palace square, fully impressed that he was the bearer of most important information.

As he disappeared through the archway, with one accord we gave utterance to the same sentiment. We said that it was no wonder that the Government intelligence was so bad, when it was from such sources that they relied for attaining it.

During the rest of the afternoon the wounded were being continually brought in. From those that accompanied them we learnt fuller and clearer particulars of the battle; it was not, however, for some days that I was able to weave the various and often conflicting stories into a consistent narrative. This narrative I will presently relate to the reader.

About four o'clock in the afternoon I was sent for by

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This incident caused a temporary check to our advance. The mutineers took advantage of it to rally; they had now reached the spot where their camp was pitched; either the sight of it inspirited them, or perhaps they obtained from it some reinforcements. They formed across the road, and again appeared disposed to dispute our advance; but again, as the Sikhs and English soldiers drew near, the mutineers lost courage. They wavered, then they turned, then they broke into a tumultuous flight, which they continued till they reached the Khara Nuddeé; arrived at the bank, they plunged through the water and dispersed in scattered bands over the country on the other side. As the rebel army was now utterly routed, and had lost camp, baggage, and artillery, Colonel Cotton did not consider it necessary to continue the pursuit. He recalled his troops and returned to the parade ground. The victory had been gained before Colonel Cotton assumed the command; but it was owing to him that in place of being simply defeated, the mutineers, as an army, were annihilated.

It was due to the different officers that, at the commencement, we did not sustain a reverse. From all I could learn, so extreme was the first confusion that there was practically no one in general command. Captain Pearson, I believe, silenced and took the enemy's battery in the garden entirely on his own responsibility. It was the capture of this battery that gave our infantry time to rally, and so turned the tide of the engagement.

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exaggerated. My friend and I thought that our present inspection of this battle-field would enable us to form some trustworthy opinion as to which of these two views was the most correct, for the enemy's slain had not yet been removed. We had taken with us pencil and paper, and each of us had made separate notes of the bodies we had met with.

Going and returning we had followed both lines of the enemy's retreat, and we had passed over the spots where the chief fighting had taken place. The impression on our minds was that we had beheld some hundreds of corpses. We added up the figures in our notes, and found to our extreme surprise that they amounted to no more than fifty-six !

The discrepancy between our notes and our impressions was so great that we partly retraced our steps and recounted the bodies to ascertain if we had correctly enumerated them. We found that our notes were perfectly accurate. The official estimate of the losses of the rebel army was, if I remember rightly, over a thousand. It was certainly several hundreds. Our enumeration satisfied us that the published accounts of the numbers of the rebels killed and wounded during the mutiny were enormously exaggerated; not wilfully exaggerated, but exaggerated in consequence of the confused and heightened impression made on the senses by the excitement of combat and by the flush of victory. Even we ourselves after calmly inspecting the field should have honestly reported the number of the slain at about six times the amount which our notes showed it really to have been. If the accounts of the battles of our own time on this point are so untrustworthy, how little reliance can be placed on those of barbarous ages and distant antiquity !

to proceed, so I thought, from some burning village. Such sights had of late been too common to cause surprise; Mr. Joyce did not appear satisfied with my explanation. He asked me if I did not think that the light came from the direction of Agra. I thought not—it was too much to the left; besides, we were thirty miles from Agra, and in so flat a country no light would be visible at that distance.

To this last remark Mr. Joyce assented, but, nevertheless, in a tone as if he was still not entirely convinced. The clouds then closed again, shut out the light, and put an end to our discussion. We rode on in silence.

We had ridden on for half a mile or so, when we heard behind us the clatter of horses' hoofs, and the tinkling of a bell; we halted, and were presently joined by a further party of their horsemen whom the Seths had sent after us. These were the men for whom we had waited. They had arrived at the Seths' house soon after we left, and had been desired by their masters to follow us. With them had come also some more of my horsemen, and a camel rider of the Seths'. It was the bell attached to the camel's neck whose tinkling we had heard.

These men were a welcome addition to our party. They raised it to over forty persons; a number quite sufficient to repel any attack from the villagers, and to force our way through any straggling body of mutineers we might happen to encounter.

We now approached a village named Badh. As the inhabitants bore an evil reputation we advanced to it with all precaution. At the end of the village a small picket of horse had been recently stationed. Their duty was to patrol the road. We found them all in the guard-house and fast asleep. I had them awoke, and desired them to saddle their horses and accompany us.

for another hour, and then arrived at a small town, the capital of that part of the district. Here we remained till the surrounding country had been brought to order. During my stay there I became acquainted with Dayby Sing's history and proceedings. They are so illustrative of native habits and of the condition of the country at the time, that an account of them may perhaps even now prove interesting to the reader.

The fourteen villages had, in times gone by, formed a single estate. During the half century of our rule they had been sold and resold, and the proprietors reduced to the condition of mere cultivators. But they still held the tradition of their former supremacy, and looked forward to the time when they might recover it. On the breaking out of the mutiny that time seemed to them to have arrived, and they hastened to avail themselves of it. In each village they rose and turned on the new owners; of these most fled, the rest fought. In these fights Dayby Sing came to the front. The proceedings on neither side were very heroic; there was much firing of matchlocks, a good deal of burning of thatch, a few men killed, more wounded. Eventually, Dayby Sing's fellow caste-men obtained the victory, re-established themselves in their ancient position, and, this done, Dayby Sing elected himself as their Rajah. He then turned his attention to his neighbours, to our Government, and to the Bunniahs.

The Bunniahs, as I have already explained, are a class of traders peculiar to India, at once dealers in grain, grocers, and money-lenders. In the latter capacity they are the most extortionate and pitiless usurers in the world. The leading Bunniahs in the neighbourhood resided in the town, where we were encamped. When Dayby Sing advanced to call them to account he had with him the sympathies of the entire population. This town

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surprising, did the country show the slightest indication of the drain thus made on it.

Horses were less plentiful, and the want of them occasioned the Government a good deal of inconvenience; for they were required for the new cavalry, and were with difficulty procured. Learning this, it occurred to me that the horsemen I had obtained from the various landholders might now be made useful. I mentioned the matter to my brother; he approved, and interested Colonel Fraser. The men were paraded, inspected, and an officer, Lieutenant De Kantzow, appointed to drill them into order. This was the origin of that body of cavalry whose services, as 'De Kantzow's horse,' were frequently mentioned in the dispatches of the ensuing campaigns, and have even, I believe, found a place in the histories of the mutiny.

It sometimes happens on a voyage that the passengers are prevented from landing when the port is reached; something such was now our situation. The danger had passed, we might have left with perfect security; but we were not permitted to do so. The detention was felt as very irksome. The fort, which we had regarded as a refuge, we now began to look on as a prison.

The desire to leave it was increased by an incident, an account of which may, perhaps, even after this lapse of time, amuse the reader. The communications with Calcutta had again been interrupted; when reopened, the contents of the first mail made many regret that they had not continued closed. This mail brought a dispatch from Lord Canning, directing that all officers away from their districts should receive only a percentage of their pay till they returned to them. Those whose salaries were thus reduced loudly denounced the injustice of the order. The heads of departments, whom it did

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Long before noon all was over, the dead removed, and our wounded conveyed to a hospital that had been extemporised in one of the halls of the mosque. Patches of blood on the pavement, and the fragments of the Koran and the shrine remained, however, evidence of the conflict, as also did the fallen masonry. One of the shells had burst below an inner gateway, and the explosion had brought down a waggon-load of stone and mortar. Less effect had been produced by another shell against the wall of the palace. A large blue stain was the only result; a pumpkin could not have produced less apparent injury.

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The column left Futtehpore Secree the next morning. It would be tedious to describe its progress, it would also be painful. The suppression of a rebellion is accompanied by much that it is sad to recall, better to forget. All that I saw convinced me how much wiser, how much more humane it would have been had my recommendations been adopted. If, instead of sending this army to traverse the country, I had been allowed a few soldiers for my personal protection, and a couple of guns to overawe the villagers, the rebel bands would have dispersed of themselves, and the rural population would have quieted as they realised the facts of our victories at Delhi and Lucknow. As a fighting force the column was admirable, and as a scourge and a terror no better instrument could have been selected. But only the extreme of official pedantry could have imagined that its presence would restore confidence or regain attachment. The Sikhs were under no sort of discipline beyond that essential for fighting—they plundered right and left; their passage through the country increased the disturbances they were sent to suppress.

The Government at Agra was composed, as I have often remarked already, of very able men; but in the dispatch of this column, as in almost all their measures during the disturbances, they showed that even able men, accustomed to routine, are unsuited to deal with entirely novel conditions.

When the column left Agra it was intended that it should proceed to the neighbourhood of Delhi, cross the Jumna, and return through the Doab. Its presence near Delhi might, perhaps, have been useful; for the country there was still disturbed, and full of fragments of the broken rebel armies. But this plan was not adhered to. The events at Cawnpore made Colonel

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the Company had been in the habit of receiving. They also imagined that the direct government by the Queen would be accompanied by the establishment of a court, and a display of that splendour so congenial to their tastes.

In the suppression of the mutinies, or rather in what followed their suppression, there were displayed many of the best English characteristics, but also some of our qualities less praiseworthy. There was no retaliation, no revenge; but, on the other hand, there was that rigid adherence to rule, that want of sympathy with the feelings of the people which, though perhaps it makes our government successful, certainly prevents it from being loved.

The revenue was demanded and its payment enforced where it had already been collected by the rebel authorities, and at a time and in parts of the country where those authorities were *de facto* sovereigns. Escaped prisoners were punished for not surrendering themselves under proclamations of the existence of which they could not have heard, and of which, if they had heard, it was impossible they could have obeyed. Also the rural disturbers were punished in accordance with laws which, at the time when the disturbances occurred, had practically ceased to exist. It would have been more merciful—it would also have been wiser—if over such offences there had been drawn a veil. Till the next mutiny these crimes would not be repeated, and then no amount of present severity would prevent their recurrence.

It was noticeable that those English officials who, during the crisis of the mutiny, had been the most moderate, the most averse to violence, were, now that the mutiny was suppressed, the least inclined to show generosity.

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sounds of movement inside the hut. In a minute or two the Fukkeer came out of the hut and handed the guide a bowl of water and a small hookah ; we could see the glow of the charcoal as he passed it. The guide drank the water, drew a puff or two from the hookah, and then inquired if all was well in front, and if he could proceed in safety.

We listened eagerly for the answer. It came as follows, 'All is well, my son, go on without fear; you will meet with no enemy.' We were elated, we did not at the moment consider to whom the term enemy was applied. We were shortly enlightened. The Fukkeer, who appeared very good-natured and communicative, proceeded to inform the horseman that the rebel army had advanced in the afternoon towards Agra, that the English soldiers had come out to meet them, that a battle had ensued, and the English had been beaten and had fled into the fort.

While the Fukkeer was talking a traveller came up and joined in the conversation; he confirmed the truth of the Fukkeer's story, and added some further particulars of his own. Among others, that the rebel army was besieging the fort, and had already knocked down one of the bastions.

In their eagerness to hear our men had advanced their horses. Some movement attracted the Fukkeer's notice; he looked up, startled, and pointing in our direction, inquired of the guide in a frightened tone 'who those men were.' The guide replied that they were his companions, also troopers of the Emperor. After some further conversation Dillawar Khan whispered to me that we had better leave. I moved on my horse, and after some difficulty the rest followed, the guide wishing the Fukkeer farewell.